



# The Washington Connection

Congresswoman **Candice Miller**

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## Rep. Miller Voices Concern on Proposed National Water Commission

Congresswoman Candice Miller expressed consternation with legislation that would create a National Water Commission. The legislation, H.R. 135, was proposed by a member of Congress from the drought-stricken Southeastern United States. During a hearing in the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Miller took issue with any proposals that could seek to divert water out of the Great Lakes for use by areas that are prone to drought conditions, including the Southeast and West.

"This hearing, and the legislation that was discussed, highlights my serious concerns and deep reservations about proposals to create a



**Rep. Miller surveys dredging equipment on the Clinton River.**

National Water Commission," Miller said. "News reports of areas like Atlanta and in Tennessee nearly running out of water are of concern and should be addressed but recent comments by Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico, who is also a presidential candidate, lead me to believe that there may be efforts to divert Great Lakes water out of the lakes and redistributed to other areas of the country."

New Mexico Governor and current presidential candidate Bill Richardson told the Las Vegas Sun "that if elected, he would bring states together to discuss how water-rich northern-tier

states could help with shortages in the southwest.

## Rep. Miller Applauds WRDA Becoming Law

*Authorized Water Projects Would Steer More than \$20 Million to Great Lakes*

Congresswoman Candice Miller voted to override the presidential veto of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA). The override vote was 361-54 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The veto override was the first presidential veto overturned in President Bush's tenure. The Senate ultimately overrode the veto as well, making WRDA law.

"I am very pleased that the House of Representatives voted in such an overwhelming fashion to override President Bush's veto of the Water Resources

Development Act," Miller said. "This legislation was crafted with bi-partisan cooperation, passed by both houses of Congress with a large bi-partisan margin and the veto was overridden today with a large bi-partisan vote. The projects authorized in this bill are important to the health of our waterways across the nation, most importantly to our Great Lakes. Each project has passed merit-based reviews. This bill includes water projects throughout the nation which are long-overdue and very necessary to protect our water quality and

quality of life. Passing this legislation was the right thing to do.

"Throughout my career in public service, one of my principal advocacies has been the protection of the Great Lakes," Miller said. "That is why I was incredibly disappointed in the President's veto of WRDA which authorizes important projects and needed funding to protect our Great Lakes."

Miller continued, "Congress has not passed a WRDA bill since 1999 and a great deal of bi-

## (Continued) Miller Opposes Any Great Lakes Water Diversion

'I want a national water policy,' Richardson told the paper. 'We need a dialogue between states to deal with issues like water conservation, water reuse technology, water delivery and water production. States like Wisconsin are awash in water.'"

(Detroit Free Press, Tina Lam, October 11, 2007)

Miller continued, "I become concerned when I hear people promoting a national water policy or strategy. This is because the only logical conclusion I can come to is that such a commission is a subversive attempt to divert water from the Great Lakes to other parts of the United States. And I do not intend to let that happen!

"If states want to continue growing or support current growth, they need to follow the precedents set over many decades. And that is to deal with water issues on their own. It should not be the role of the federal government to intervene in this area which has historically been governed by states and local municipalities. Areas which have been overdeveloped must be held accountable for their actions and not be bailed out for bad decisions that have been made as they have developed their communities.

"Michiganians are very hard working people,

and they do not ask for much from the federal government. We are generally considered a donor state, particularly when it comes to transportation issues. We have very few natural disasters in our state aside from an occasional tornado or major snowstorm. Yet we subsidize people to live in areas of the country that are not quite so safe and are not blessed with the abundant resources we have in Michigan.

"But I will tell you that there is a limit to that generosity. And it is drawn on the shores of the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes are our very identity and we will not allow them to be diverted. Not on my watch."

Congresswoman Miller urges a regional approach to water issues, such as the approach taken by the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes states have formed a compact to limit water diversions out of the Great Lakes basin.

Witnesses at the hearing represented the Environmental Protection Agency, National Wildlife Foundation, and from the states of Texas, Georgia, and Arizona. No Northeast, Mid-West, or



*One of Rep. Miller's principle advocacies since being elected to Congress is the protection and preservation of the Great Lakes*

Plains States representatives testified, a point Congresswoman Miller made in her opening statement.

## (Continued) Miller Votes to Override Veto, WRDA Now Law

partisan cooperation went into finally passing this legislation. The President believes this bill spends too much money. While I agree that we need to reduce overall federal spending, I believe there are plenty of other places in the federal budget to cut that do not impact needed protections for our environment, most importantly our Great Lakes. I like to think of myself as a fiscal conservative, but part of that means being able to clearly make choices about priority spending. In my mind, these types of projects are priorities for our nation."

"With historically low lakes levels, increasing invasive species and other

critical challenges facing our lakes, now is the time to take action. I am glad that this good bill is now law."

WRDA originally passed the House by a 381-40 margin. It would have significant benefits to the Great Lakes including \$20 million for the Lake St. Clair/St. Clair River Management Plan, a feasibility study for restoration of the Clinton River, and an electronic barrier to keep Asian Carp from coming into the Great Lakes.

Under the Constitution, a bill that has been vetoed by the President becomes law if two-thirds of the Members in the House and Senate vote to pass the bill over the objections of the President, and

thereby override the veto of the President.

H.R. 1495 authorizes approximately \$23 billion for more than 900 projects and studies for the Corps of Engineers within its existing missions of flood damage reduction, navigation, environmental restoration, water supply, hydropower, and environmental infrastructure.

## Article: Congress Approves \$2 Million for Project in Shelby Twp

by **Chris Williams**  
Source Staff Writer

The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation Nov. 8 that included \$2 million in funding for a partnership between the military and automotive makers that would bring jobs and revenue to Shelby Township.

The funding, part of the Department of Defense Appropriation, would help create the Macomb County Business Accelerator, a partnership between Automation Alley and the Army's Tank-automotive and Armaments Command to manufacture parts for the military's more than 3,000 weapons systems at a Delphi facility in Shelby Township slated to close in the future.

The project was initially proposed in May by congressional representatives Candice Miller and Joe Knollenberg, and must gain approval in the Senate and from the president before the project will become a reality.

Miller said the project would benefit the struggling Michigan economy as well as the military, which has been impacted by business closures across the country that have made it difficult to manufacture necessary parts.

"This funding is great news for Macomb County, for our military and for Automation Alley, and I'm pleased I was able to help," said Miller. "This accelerator will be the impetus for new jobs and new growth in our manufacturing sector as our auto manufacturers begin to diversify their production with this accelerator. This is an innovative project and I believe Macomb County has the skilled work-

force needed to make it a success. This is truly a win-win situation for both the automakers and the military."

Ken Rogers, executive director of Automation Alley, said the partnership would help the struggling Michigan economy, in which the automotive industry has been particularly hard-hit.

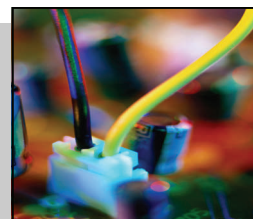
"Automation Alley looks forward to working with TARDEC (TACOM'S engineering branch) on its significant parts obsolescence program," he said. "This project will help Michigan companies find procurement opportunities with the main ground vehicle purchasing entity for the Army. We are especially pleased to be involved in an effort that will help to diversify the automotive manufacturing supplier base in Southeast Michigan."

Township Supervisor Ralph Maccarone said the project would be a welcome addition to the township. He said situating the project in Shelby Township makes sense, considering that other defense contractors, such as General Dynamics, currently operate in Sterling Heights, Rochester Hills and other neighboring communities.

"Not only does it sustain jobs, but there's also spin-off revenue being brought into the community. And national defense is going to be an industry that's not going anywhere; it's a strong industry," Maccarone said. "We appreciate what Congresswoman Miller is doing for the area. She's done a great job taking care of her district."

Knollenberg also praised Miller's work, along with that of other local representatives who pushed to bring jobs and revenue to Michigan.

"This project proves great things can be accomplished



**Modernizing our manufacturing industries and utilizing our highly-skilled workforce can prove to be a boon for Michigan's economy**

when we work in a bipartisan fashion," Knollenberg said. "I was pleased to work with Senator Levin, Senator Stabenow, Congressman Sander Levin and Congresswoman Candice Miller on this important project. Michigan manufacturers will benefit, along with our military. This is an example of how public-private collaboration can be a positive thing for Southeast Michigan."

A vote is expected in the Senate in the future although no date has been set. [Editor's Note: The Senate passed the legislation on November 8, 2007 and it was signed into law by President Bush on November 11, 2007]

## Article: Legislators: Hands Off Our Water!

By **Todd Spangler**  
Free Press Washington Staff

WASHINGTON – Two Michigan members of Congress fired a stern warning Thursday to colleagues in faster-growing, drought-stricken parts of the nation: Don't even consider using a seemingly harmless bill to study the nation's water usage as cover to begin a process aimed at taking Great Lakes water.

"I don't think I'm being too alarmist about this," said Rep. Candice Miller, a Harrison Township Republican. "Do not look to the Great Lakes to solve the nation's water problems."

Her Michigan colleague on the House subcommittee on water resources and environment, Grand Rapids Republican Vern Ehlers, predicted what might happen if anyone attempted a water grab.

"I would suspect we'd call up the militia and take up arms," Ehlers said. "We feel that serious about it." Their comments came Thursday during a discussion about legislation called the 21st Century Water Commission Act, which would authorize a study of how the nation uses water, where it comes from and how long it will last.

But worries are high among some in the upper Midwest that dry states could look to solve their problems by going after the Great Lakes and their vast supply of fresh water, despite laws already in

place allowing the region's governors to block any attempt to divert water and the massive public works undertaking such an effort would entail.

### The dry context

Fueling those concerns are global warming, a decade of drought in the West where population has grown enormously, and recent news reports of a faltering supply of fresh water in the southeastern United States.

Last month, Democratic presidential contender and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson touched off a controversy when he said the upper Midwest (specifically Wisconsin) is "awash in water."

Richardson's staff later made it clear he wasn't in favor of any federal move to transfer water from the Great Lakes.

On Thursday, Rep. John Linder, the Georgia Republican proposing the water commission for the third time, also tried to allay fears that Great Lakes water would be diverted or that states' rights would be trampled.

"This is not to establish any new federal policy to tell the people of the Great Lakes what to do with their water," said Linder, adding that the commission is more about getting people to talk about conservation – how to capture and reuse water.

Miller wasn't buying it.

She noted that the panel talking about the legislation included speakers from Arizona, Georgia and Texas -- and none from the Great Lakes region.

And she noted that the commission and a possible national water policy were being proposed by Linder,

who represents a drought-stricken area.

So, Miller said: "Forgive me if I, as a representative of the Great Lakes State, become concerned when I hear people promoting a national water policy or strategy. But the only logical conclusion I can come to is that such a commission is subversive attempt to divert water from the Great Lakes to other parts of the United States."

"And I do not intend to let that happen."

### Against the flow

She may not be able to stop the commission, though. Similar legislation was passed by the House in the last Congress, over Miller's objections, but got bottled up in the Senate. This year, it was included in an energy bill approved by the House, though the Senate, again, hasn't taken it up.

Miller asked the bill's supporters if they would be willing to add a provision specifically saying the commission wouldn't recommend diverting water from the Great Lakes.

Some supporters were somewhat in agreement, though they generally were against taking any point of discussion off the table.

That wasn't good enough for Miller.

"I'm very parochial about this," she said.



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## Washington Connection Weekly



### This Month's Radio Addresses:

**11/1/07—Michigan Must Implement Real ID**

**11/8/07—WRDA Becomes Law**

**11/15/07—Hands Off Our Water!**

**11/22/07—Give Thanks: Purchase Pre-Paid**

**Phone Cards for Our Troops**



## Rep. Miller Speaks to Congress about Low Lake Levels in Great Lakes

Watch a video of her speech at <http://candicemiller.house.gov>

**Madame Speaker, I rise today because low water levels are having a devastating effect on those that live on, work off of, or travel the Great Lakes.**

**Shipping vessels have been forced to lighten their loads, marinas have become inaccessible for recreational boaters, and the fragile environmental habitats of many species have been affected. This is a serious issue that**

**needs to be examined and remedies found immediately.**

**I was very pleased that the International Joint Commission announced recently that they will expedite the St. Clair River portion of their Upper Great Lakes study. This portion will determine whether there are ongoing changes in the River leading to increased water flow out of the Upper Great Lakes.**

**The Great Lakes comprise**

**1/5<sup>th</sup> of the world's fresh water supply. The health of the Great Lakes is critical for commerce and quality of life, but also for the entire future of fresh water supplies.**

**I have worked closely with the IJC on this issue for several years and their announcement that they will quicken the pace of the study is a sound decision in a time when the lakes are historically low.**